

EXHIBIT 1

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Teenagers, Stop Asking for Nude Photos

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Adolescence

By LISA DAMOUR JAN. 2, 2018

Teenagers are drafted into a sexual culture that rests on a harmful premise: On the heterosexual field, boys typically play offense and girls play defense. This problematic framework underlies the findings of a new study that documents, in alarming detail, girls' reports of the common coercive practices boys use to solicit nude digital photographs. An analysis of nearly 500 accounts from 12- to 18-year-old girls about their negative experiences with sexting found that over two-thirds had been asked for explicit images.

The majority described facing intense pressure that often began with promises of affection and discretion in exchange for “nudes,” before accelerating to “persistent requests, anger displays, harassment and threats.” The study drew from comments posted between 2010 and 2016 on *A Thin Line*, MTV's campaign against sexting, cyber bullying and digital dating abuse. As one research participant explained about

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my bf preasured me for hours to send him pictures of me naked. Now he threarens to send them out if i dont send hin more really nasty pics. The stuff i have to do is unbelievable. im 14.

Other research has found that while both boys and girls send naked images, boys are nearly four times as likely to pressure girls to send sexts as girls are to pressure boys to do so.

In the wider culture, it appears we have suddenly come to the limit of our tolerance for the sexualized abuse of power by adult men. A logical next step is to recalibrate some of the toxic norms that have taken hold among teenagers. Most schools and many parents already tell teenagers not to send sexualized selfies. But why don't we also tell adolescents to stop asking for nude photos from one another?

It is of course true that simply declaring a new behavioral code will not erase a problem. But rules can make a difference. For starters, they articulate norms. We advise adolescents not to share naked pictures because we worry that minors may not recognize the full scope of the potential personal, and possibly legal, consequences of creating and distributing sexually explicit content. But when we say next to nothing against the practice of soliciting sexts, we miss the opportunity to help teenagers see why that might also be a bad idea.

Sara Thomas, the author of the new study and a doctoral student at the School of Education and Social Policy at Northwestern, noted that simply telling girls not to send photographs "ignores the complicated tensions they are negotiating on a regular basis." If we really don't want teenagers to send sexualized photos, we should set limits on the most likely trigger for sexting: requests.

In talking about sexting with both daughters and sons, parents might say, "We don't want you to share nude photos of yourself — even with someone you really care about and trust — because doing so puts you in a terrible position. The relationship might change, or that person could simply lose track of their phone. It's just not worth the risk." To that we should add, "And it's not O.K. to request naked pictures

We might also alert teenagers that, depending on where they live, they could face legal consequences for requesting nude selfies from minors. States without laws specifically addressing sexting fall back on established child pornography statutes which can, in some cases, deliver severe penalties for soliciting, enticing or encouraging the creation of explicit content.

Rules can also serve as useful behavioral speed bumps. Adolescents are impulsive by nature and gaps can readily emerge between what they know they ought to do and what they actually do. Teenagers who are asking, much less harassing, peers for sexts almost certainly realize that they are crossing a line. But if that line is never stressed or enforced by adults, they are far less likely to heed it. I'm also sure that plenty of boys would appreciate having a clearly articulated rule upon which they could blame their good behavior when they are pressed by peers to obtain illicit images.

Nearly a decade ago, the head of the school where I consult two days a week sternly warned our students to stay out of an ugly imbroglio involving kids at another school, which was playing out on Facebook. When it was clear that our students had totally complied, I asked one of our most levelheaded juniors how she accounted for her peers' surprising restraint. She said, "Well, you *want* to involve yourself, and you almost do. Then you remember the rule. And then, a little bit later, you realize that jumping in probably would have been a bad idea anyway."

In a far separate domain, the National Hockey League penalizes both acts of aggression, such as head-butting, and also "inciting an opponent into incurring a penalty." Now, hockey arenas are among America's temples of manliness and may not be the first place one would look for models of decorum. And certainly some players do not abide by those rules. But the fact that the rules address both sides could provide a useful starting point for a conversation, especially with boys who question whether provoking misbehavior constitutes misconduct.

Finally, rules can be used to address power imbalances. The girls in Ms. Thomas's study felt they had little recourse for dealing with the often hostile barrag

...they want me to send naked pics of me and I don't want to send them....but like idk wat to do cuz they said if I don't send them tht their going to spreads roumors and help me out plzzz :((

Shifting the norms about soliciting images could helpfully shift the balance of power. If parents and schools have made clear that the requests are a violation, girls would feel that they had the option of taking screen shots of them and seeking help from adults.

That our focus has been so preponderantly on the sending, not requesting, of sexts underscores the exact problem we need to address. We accept and perpetuate the boys-play-offense and girls-play-defense framework because it is so atmospheric as to be almost invisible. Indeed, as someone who cares for adolescents for a living I can say that it was painful for me to realize that many of my early career conversations with teenage girls boiled down to: “The adults are asking you to regulate adolescent sexuality. Because we’re not going to ask the boys.”

As we re-examine the sexual power dynamics between adults, we owe it to our teenagers to include them in the progress we are making. Laying out high and equitable expectations for young people as they begin their own romantic lives can only be a step in the right direction.

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